

Mark 13 Discussion Questions

- 1) Share a time you really wanted to have certainty and security about the future?
- 2) What's happened since last week (i.e. Mk 11)?

Read Mark 13:1-13

- 3) Why does Jesus respond the way he does to the disciples?
- 4) What are the main areas Jesus tells his disciples to be on the lookout for?
 - a) What is Jesus' purpose in giving us these lists?
- 5) How does Jesus provide assurance and purpose in the face of inevitable suffering for our faith?
 - a) Share a time you've found this to be true in your own life

Read Mark 13:14-27

- 6) What is the deal with the "abomination of desolation"? (see Dan 9:27; 11:31; 12:11)

Bonus Question:

According to Jesus what's the problem with judging ministry on "Signs and wonders" (v22) (cf. Deut 13:1-5; Mk 8:11-12; 1 Cor 1:22-23)

- In what ways do we fall into the trap of asking for "signs" today? Give examples

- 7) Despite all these terrifying events, what hope does Jesus give us and what are we called to do?

Read Mark 13:28-37

- 8) What or rather Who does Jesus direct our focus to in v26 & 32 and how does that give us assurance?
- 9) What does it practically look like for us to be "on guard/stay awake" today?

Supplementary Notes

The Abomination that causes desolation: Different Possibilities

- 1) 168/7 B.C. Antiochus IV (Epiphanes) erected an altar to Zeus on the altar of burnt offering in the temple and sacrificing a sow on it
 - Pagan altar on which swine were sacrificed
 - Came to symbolise an unspeakable affront to the sanctity of God's house and to God himself
 - This provoked the Maccabean Revolt (167-160 B.C.)
- 2) Pontius Pilate attempted to have Roman soldiers march with their standards into Jerusalem (during Jesus' lifetime)
 - Didn't take place
- 3) Jesus' suffering and death on the cross
 - a) E.g. Jn 2:19
- 4) A.D. 37-41 Caligula attempted to erect statues of himself in the temple (Josephus, *War* 2.184–203)
 - But Jews never fled to the mountains during this time
 - Statues were never enacted
- 5) A.D. 67-68 Phanni the high priest appointed by the Zealots was an abomination because he was not qualified to serve in the holy of holies
 - More Josephus' bias
- 6) A.D. 70 entry into the temple by Titus after its destruction (Josephus, *War* 6.260)
 - After the temple had already been destroyed and the Jewish sacrifices had already ceased
 - Jews actually fled *into* Jerusalem before the war with Rome not *out of it*
 - Titus' siege happened in summer (July-Sep A.D. 70), rather than winter (Mk 13:18)
 - Josephus actually is more concerned about the fire that destroyed the temple, which has no mention in Mark
- 7) End time Antichrist: See 2 Thess 2:3-4